

Comments in response to Localism Notice of Proposed Rulemaking MB Document No. 04-233

The following comments are submitted in response to the Localism Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, released January 24, 2008, in MB Docket No. 04-233.

Advisory Boards

The proposal for Advisory Boards are a sensible and prudent business approach that many stations undertake in some fashion. These would work best in smaller markets with few stations. In mid and larger size markets a formal Advisory Board requirement would mean several stations vying for the same “leaders of the community” and indeed the smaller, less powerful stations (LPFM’s and NCE”s) would not be able to attract those “leaders” to their boards. Further, such boards if required should only be “advisory” and not have any decision powers over station programming. A record of meeting notes might be required and could be utilized by the FCC in the Renewal Licensing process.

Renewal Application Processing

Specific minute by minute logging of programming would place a big burden on many smaller stations—particularly LPFM and NCE stations. The approach of attempting to gain greater public comment on a station’s performance in a market is preferable. Creating voluminous record keeping not only would create a burden to smaller stations, but would also overwhelm FCC staff with renewal reviews.

Main Studio Programming Origination

While I have always been an advocate of local origination of programming, there is some question as to how effective an origination requirement might be in stimulating greater local programming related to community issues. Regardless, this issue should not be intertwined with that of unattended station operation.

Today’s automation capabilities and equipment stability enable greater efficiency with unattended operation. Requiring fully attended operations would have the opposite effect of providing greater diversity and more responsive community programming.

Most operators of LPFM and many NCE stations find it difficult to generate revenue and we must depend in part or in whole on volunteers. In our case, it would be impossible to find 168 hours a week of volunteer time. We would need to reduce operational hours to the minimum required or go silent. Currently our station is able to offer unique community programming because we can operate unattended.

Here are specific examples of programming that could not be undertaken if I was required to be sitting in a studio:

1. On a recent Saturday morning I was at a 5k-10k road race interviewing race winners for a "Space Coast Running Report" that we produce and air multiple times per week.
2. During the week I went to the area Wildlife Hospital" to interview the director of their non-profit organization about fund raising needs.
3. A couple of weeks prior to that I was at a noon press conference where our State Senator was revealing whether he would seek the U. S. Senate seat. (There was no other radio station there.)
4. And for the 4th year I do a play-by-play delayed broadcast of an area Little League team "Game of the Week" as well as a unique sports news program on the results of 34 games played by the teams each week.

These types of community involved programming efforts would be severely compromised or rendered impossible if unattended operation was prohibit: thus local, unique community programming--the objective of "localism" would be further eroded rather than enhanced.

We urge the FCC not to adopt rules that will stymie rather than encourage greater local programming efforts.

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